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E.O. 12065 GDS 10-12-85 (FRIEDMAN, TOWNSEND B.) OR-P  
TAGS SHUM, AR  
SUBJECT (U) HUMAN RIGHTS SUMMARY - OCTOBER 5-11

REF: BUENOS AIRES 8243

SUMMARY: CONTINUED REPORTS OF INCREASED TERRORIST CAPABILITIES, SEVERAL INTERESTING COURT DECISIONS, CONTINUED ATTENTION TO THE REQUEST THAT FORMER PRESIDENT HECTOR CAMPORA BE ALLOWED TO TRAVEL ABROAD, AND A NEW PETITION BY THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES MARKED THE HUMAN RIGHTS SCENE THIS WEEK. END SUMMARY.

1. TERRORIST RESURGENCE -----

WE CONTINUE TO RECEIVE FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES REPORTS THAT A NUMBER OF MONTONEROS-ABOUT 20- HAVE RETURNED IN RECENT MONTHS TO THE COUNTRY TO CONDUCT SPECTACULAR ACTS OF TERRORISM, SIMILAR TO THE BOMBING OF THE KLEIN HOUSE TWO WEEKS AGO. IN ADDITION, ANOTHER GROUP OF MONTONEROS DEDICATED TO PROPAGANDA AND AGITATION ARE REPORTEDLY ORGANIZED AND ACTIVE IN THE COUNTRY. ONE OF THESE ACTIVITIES IS THE INTERRUPTION OF TELEVISION BROADCASTS-WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE FROM TIME TO TIME-WITH MONTONERO PROPAGANDA, THROUGH THE USE OF SECRET MOBILE TRANSMITTERS. THE SECURITY FORCES HAVE REPORTEDLY SCORED SOME SUCCESSES AGAINST THE AGITATION TEAMS BUT NOT YET AGAINST THE TERRORIST SQUADS.

2. FOR THE ARGENTINE PUBLIC, SQUEEZED BY INFLATION AND THE GOA'S ECONOMIC MEASURES, THE GOVERNMENT'S SUCCESS IN ENDING TERRORISM IS ONE OF ITS PALPABLE ACHIEVEMENTS. IF THE MONTONEROS DO MANAGE TO MOUNT A SIGNIFICANT CAMPAIGN OF TERRORISM HERE IT COULD STRIP THIS PIECE OF LEGITIMACY FROM VIDELA AND VIOLA. THE BENEFICIARIES ALMOST CERTAINLY WOULD BE THE HARDLINE MILITARY MEN WHO STILL CALL FOR A MASSIVE CRACKDOWN ON ALL DISSIDENTS SO AS TO ROOT OUT SUBVERSION. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT PRESIDENT VIDELA, GENERAL VIOLA AND THEIR SUPPORTERS TAKE A SOOTHING PUBLIC LINE-MOST RECENTLY IN PRESIDENT VIDELA'S STATEMENT ON LEAVING JAPAN-SUGGESTING THAT A MINIMUM LEVEL OF TERRORISM IS NATURAL, GIVEN THE RECENT PAST AND THE GOA WILL SUCCEED, ULTIMATELY, IN CONTROLLING IT. WE NEVERTHELESS BELIEVE THAT EVEN A THREAT OF RENASCENT TERRORISM BODES ILL FOR HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRESS HERE, AND WE WILL WATCH THE SITUATION CAREFULLY.

3. (U) JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES APPEAL -----

THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES HAVE APPEALED TO THE PRESIDENT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S SEPTEMBER DECISION CONFIRMING

THE DECREE DENYING THEM THE STATUS OF A RECOGNIZED RELIGION. IF THE PRESIDENT SHOULD UPHOLD THE FOREIGN MINISTRY-AS MOST EXPECT-THE WITNESSES WILL TAKE THEIR CASE AGAIN TO THE COURTS. WE ARE TOLD THAT THE SUPREME COURT'S DECISION ORDERING SCHOOLS TO ENROLL WITNESS CHILDREN WHO ARE TOO YOUNG TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR ACTS (IN PRACTICE THROUGH PRIMARY) IS BEING UNEVENLY APPLIED BY LOCAL ADMINISTRATORS, WITH THE RESULT THAT THE CHILDREN ARE BEING ENROLLED IN SOME LOCATIONS BUT NOT IN OTHERS. THE WITNESSES ARE APPEALING THROUGH THE COURTS IN AREAS WHERE CHILDREN ARE TURNED AWAY. THEY ARE ALSO BEGINNING LEGAL PROCEEDINGS TO ALLOW WITNESS CHILDREN ACCESS TO SECONDARY EDUCATION.

4. CAMPORA CASE STILL ON THE BURNER -----

PRESIDENT VIDELA IS FACED WITH ANOTHER DIFFICULT PROBLEM: WHAT TO DO WITH FORMER PRESIDENT HECTOR CAMPORA, IN ASYLUM AT THE MEXICAN EMBASSY AND REPORTEDLY SUFFERING FROM CANCER. THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT HAS ASKED THE GOVERNMENT TO ALLOW CAMPORA TO TRAVEL ABROAD FOR TREATMENT. MINISTER OF INTERIOR HARGUINDEGUY OCTOBER 9 SAID THAT THE DECISION ON WHETHER TO ALLOW CAMPORA TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY RESTS WITH PRESIDENT VIDELA. HARGUINDEGUY SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS MEDICAL REPORTS BY ARGENTINE DOCTORS WHO HAVE EXAMINED CAMPORA.

5. AS AN OBJECT OF CONTEMPT AND REVENGE, CAMPORA SURPASSES EVEN TIMBERMAN IN THE MIND OF THE ARGENTINE MILITARY, WHO TRACE CORRUPTION AND TOLERATION OF TERRORISM DIRECTLY TO HIS PRESIDENCY. EVEN WITH THE VATICAN ON HIS SIDE, A DECISION TO RELEASE CAMPORA WILL CAUSE WAVES IN THE ARMED FORCES. NEVERTHELESS, TWO MEMBERS OF VIDELA'S OFFICE SUGGESTED TO US RECENTLY THAT LIKE IT OR NOT, CAMPORA IS A SICK MAN AND THAT SITUATION IS PROBABLY OVERRIDING. THE PERONISTS, HOWEVER, MAY HAVE DONE CAMPORA A SCANT FAVOR, WHEN ON OCTOBER 11, THEY RELEASED A STATEMENT CALLING FOR HIS RELEASE ALONG WITH THAT OF OTHER PERONIST LEADERS NOW BEING HELD, USING THE TIMBERMAN DECISION AS A PRECEDENT.

6. (U) COURT ACCEPTS HABEAS CORPUS PETITION AND ORDERS ITS SUBJECT FREED -----

THERE WERE SEVERAL INTERESTING COURT DECISION ANNOUNCED DURING THE WEEK. IN ONE, AN APPELLATE COURT UPHELD A HABEAS CORPUS PETITION AND, IN ADDITION, ORDERED THE SUBJECT OF THE PETITION-PERLA AMELIA DIEZ-RELEASED. THE COURT ALSO DENIED TWO OTHER PETITIONS. IN ANOTHER CASE, A COURT ORDERED THAT FIFTEEN EMPLOYEES OF THE STATE NEWS AGENCY-TELAM-WHO WERE FIRED IN 1978 IN CHARGES OF CORRUPTION BE IMMEDIATELY REHIRED AND INDEMNIFIED. THE COURT REPORTEDLY FOUND THAT THE MANAGEMENT OF TELAM HAD PROCEEDED ARBITRARILY AND ILLEGALLY AND WITHOUT SUFFICIENT CAUSE. WE ARE SEEKING TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE DECISIONS, PARTICULARLY THE POSITIVE ACTION ON THE HABEAS CORPUS PETITION, A VERY UNUSUAL DEVELOPMENT HERE.

CASTRO

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(X) Release ( ) Excise ( ) Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: ( ) In Part (X) In Full

( ) Classify as ( ) Extend as ( ) Downgrade to

Date Declassify on Reason

*No more news this week*

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